BIBLICAL CREATION

JOURNAL OF THE BIBLICAL CREATION SOCIETY

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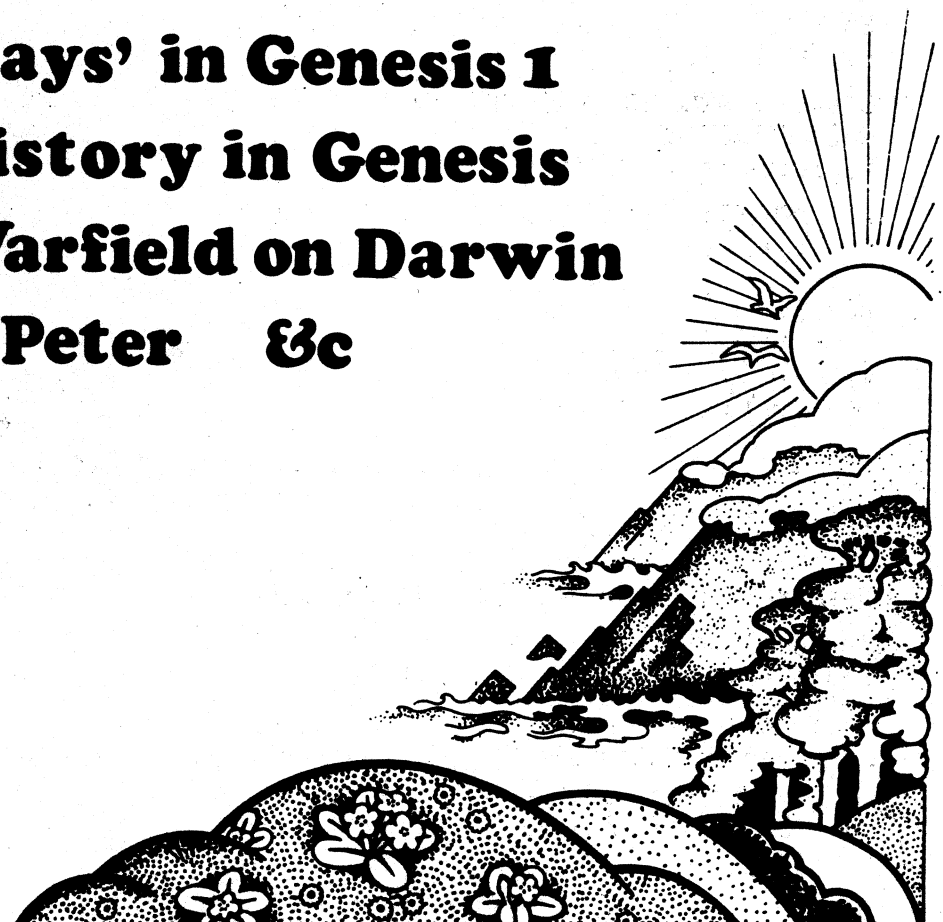

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EDITORIALS

Interpreting Scripture

The problem of how to interpret and understand the Bible has been with the Church from the start. It arises acutely for Christians who believe, as we do, that the Bible is not only inspired but infallible. For how is this infallibility mediated? How are the infallible statements to be understood? By what criteria may we decide between the conflicting claims of Biblical interpreters?

There can be no simple solution to this problem, a problem which has exercised the minds of some of the greatest Christian thinkers. It is too easy to plump for a simplistic approach, and too often evangelicals in their desire to be true to God's Word have been tempted to do that. Is the criterion to be that we shall interpret Scripture literally? We must explain what that means. If it allows for the poetic and the metaphorical, then all well and good. If it seeks to short-cut the problem by ruling them out, then it will not do; for there is a great deal in the Bible which is not simply historical description. On the other hand, shall we say - as increasing numbers of evangelicals are - that the sole guide is what we may determine of the intention of the human author? If he intended to write sober history, this approach runs, then we must interpret this narrative as sober history; if he intended to write symbolic prose or poetry then we must see it as that. Undoubtedly this is a vital element in any faithful evangelical interpretation, but left on its own it also is unbalanced. What if we come to the conclusion that the man intended to write inaccurate and misleading history? To call such 'infallible' is to make nonsense of the English language.

We who believe that Scripture does not allow us to accept the evolutionary account of our origins are often accused of being 'wooden' and simple-minded in our interpretation of Scripture. Maybe some of us are, though it is to be expected that those who are rather too flexible in their approach should accuse us in this way. Yet it is not on any such 'wooden' exegesis that our case rests, and we should make that plain to our fellow-evangelicals. Several of the articles in this issue show the importance of serious and thoughtful study of Scripture to the Creationist case, and the strength of that case at a level at which many British evangelicals have never come across it. Let us press home our argument with the confidence and the charity that God has given to us.

Nigel M. de S. Cameron

'Life on Earth'

The BBC series, "Life on Earth", has proved to be extremely popular. This is not surprising in view of its excellent portrayal of the wonders of the natural world. It has been in a sense a religious series. David Attenborough's whole approach has demonstrated his faith in the process of evolution. The unfortunate thing is that

viewers have not been made aware that very much of what has been said has been pure speculation. The details of the evolutionary process have instead been presented as absolute fact.

The "New Scientist" drew attention to this trend in its review, by Colin Patterson, of the first eipsode (18 January, 1979, p. 193). He said:

"... I noticed a few ominous signs of the 'scientists have discovered' or 'all dentists agree' approach. The theory of evolution is highly abstract. After all, no one has yet seen a species, let alone the origin of one ... The excellent graphs used to illustrate the origin of life and of DNA may have left the impression that these stories are true ... Darwin may not need protection or advertisement in Britain, but I wonder what the creation lobby will stir up when the series is shown in the United States."

Christians have written to David Attenborough to express their views about his programmes. In his replies to them he has made it plain that he is aware of creationist writings, and also that he is highly contemptuous of them.

Any Christian who has seen this series must have been saddened to see "evolution" receive the worship due to God for the miracle of creation.

Sylvia Baker

NEWS

Letter to New Scientist

The following letter was published in New Scientist for 8 February 1979, written by Professor Edgar Andrews, the President of BCS.

It was accompanied on the Letters page by a cartoon of the Almighty, represented by an aged chef surmounted by a halo, crying 'Let there be soup!'

Your AAS report "Rocks put back birthdate of life on earth" (11 January, p. 75) is replete with the scientific non sequiturs which normally accompany any explanation of the hypothesis of chemical evolution and without which that hypothesis becomes demonstrably hypothetical! You say "A soup of simple chemicals became organised to form ... molecular building blocks of life, something we know happened here on Earth and elsewhere in the Universe too" (my italics). This is blatant confidence trickery, the victims being your many young readers and others not qualified to judge the issue for themselves. For a start, both the "primordial soup" and the "primordial atmosphere" are totally hypothetical. No one knows whether they ever existed in the form claimed by chemical evolution. In fact there are strong scientific arguments against them which I have detailed elsewhere (From Nothing to Nature, Evangelical Press, 1978). The only argument in their favour is the circular reasoning that, without them, chemical evolution could not have occurred. Of course, everyone has the

right to his own beliefs about the creation of life (my own happens to be that life was created miraculously by God). What is contrary to the spirit of science is to claim, as does your report, that such beliefs are scientifically established facts. And how do we "know" that life has arisen "elsewhere" in the Universe? Your report continues with the reminder that "no one has yet built a living organism ... starting from scratch". True, indeed, but this disarming admission conceals the enormous gap between what synthetic chemistry, with all its skill and knowledge, can make in the laboratory and the great complexity and organisation of the simplest living cell. There exists as yet no remotely plausible explanation of how random chemical process could create the information-packed entity we call a living cell, even given infinite time!

Newton Scientific Association: Spring Meeting

A meeting of the NSA took place on 3 March 1979 in London under the chairmanship of Mr M. Hunt, BSc. The theme of the afternoon and evening proceedings was 'Time and Chance in Evolution'. In the event the subjects of the three speakers were rather diverse, but this did not detract from the impact of their presentations. Dr David Gower, Reader in Biochemistry at Guy's Hospital Medical School (University of London) began the session by asking whether there is evidence for design in Biochemistry. Dr Gower, as a Creationist, began of course with the explicit presupposition that bio-polymers and cellular structures are indeed designed by our Creator. From this starting point he showed that these structures manifest the hallmarks of deliberate intelligent design in their structure and function. The topics he considered were the distribution of certain iso-enzymes in different body structures, the structure of cell membranes, and structure/property relationships in Haemoglobin. This latter topic has been the subject of a brilliant lecture given by Dr Max Perutz, FRS, at many research institutions in the UK. Yet the explicitly creationist orientation of Dr Gower's thinking led him to highlight the physiological significance of these particular molecular properties. Creationist science calls for a combination of both mechanistic and teleological thinking, such as was refreshingly illustrated in this lecture.

The second presentation was given by Dr John Peet, a senior lecturer in Chemistry. His theme was the dating technique proposed by J.L. Bada based upon the rate at which optically active amino acids form optically inactive mixtures. Dr Peet began by explaining the principles of optical activity and then considered the problems surrounding stereospecific synthesis of amino acids by evolutionary means. The main part of his lecture showed the weaknesses of amino acid racemisation as a process for dating organic remains. This was a thorough analysis in terms of physical organic chemistry and it is to be hoped that the NSA will publish this paper as a definitive critique of this proposed dating process.

The final paper was given on the subject of Radiocarbon Dating by Mr David Tyler, MSc, a Physicist who has already contributed important research papers on this topic to the Creation Research Society Quarterly.

All dating techniques require cross-checking and calibration against other dating techniques. In ^{14}C dating, cross-checks have been made with both tree-ring dating and with classical Egyptian chronology. But what if there are errors in the chronologies against which ^{14}C dates are calibrated? Evidently this is the case with Egyptian chronology. Mr Tyler led us surefooted through this complex series of problems and outlined proposals for re-calibration of ^{14}C dates. A general feature of his approach was to endorse the radiocarbon dating technique, with the proviso that dates are re-calibrated to allow for non-equilibrium in the levels of ^{14}C in the atmosphere and also the above-mentioned flaws in Egyptian chronology. These re-calibrations have the effect of shortening many of the dates previously assigned to artifacts.

This was a successful conference with themes which went some way beyond mere negative criticism of evolutionary thinking. The next NSA day conference is planned for Saturday, 3 November 1979.

David Watts
Manchester

Research Scientists' Christian Fellowship

The Annual conference this year is planned for Saturday, 29 September in London. The subject is "The Limits of Science". Details available from RSCF, 38 De Montfort Street, Leicester LE1 7GP.

Move to USA

Mr David C.C. Watson has accepted the invitation to become Director of the Institute of Creation Research, Mid-West Centre. Mr Watson is widely respected as a man of Christian principles who was prepared to face dismissal from his teaching post rather than have to teach as fact non-Christian views of Genesis. Mr Watson has maintained a testimony to the Creationist position during years in which Theistic Evolutionary thought has been in the ascendancy. The rethinking of these issues, in which many are now engaging, is due in no small measure to his influence.

Darwinism and Indoctrination

Readers of BC may be interested in a paper by Mr G.H. Harper, MSc, with the above title. As mentioned in BC 2 (p. 41f) Mr Harper spoke on this theme at the Day Conference Evolution and Education last September.

Mr Harper's paper, prepared during study-leave at St Johns College, Oxford, appeared originally in The School Science Review, vol. 59, no. 207, pp 258-268, December 1977. It has been reprinted in the Creation Research Society Quarterly, vol. 15, September 1978, p. 83-87.

AGM of the Evolution Protest Movement

The Annual General Meeting of the Evolution Protest Movement is to be held on 15 September at the Caxton Hall, Westminster (nearest underground: St James' Park, district and circle lines). The meeting will begin at 2.00 pm and finish by 5.00 pm. There will be two talks: Dr D.T. Rosevear on the case against evolution; and Mr Malcolm Bowden on Apemen. The film, 'The World that Perished', will be shown.

Biblical Creation Society Elections

At the first elections held by the BCS the following Committee was elected to take over from the Steering Committee, membership of which had been by invitation. The elected Committee has now taken office and prepared a draft Constitution for the Society.

Chairman	The Revd. Nigel Cameron
Secretary	Martyn Hallett, Esq
Assistant Sec.	David Barr, Esq
Treasurer	Paul Woodbridge, Esq
	Mrs Sylvia Baker
	Dr Terry Hamblin
	Gordon McConville, Esq
	David Tyler, Esq
	Paul Verschueren, Esq
	Dr David Watts

Withycombe Barton Christian Field Study Centre

We have news that it is planned to set up a centre near Exmouth, Devon, for Christian study. The attractive brochure speaks as follows:

"What is it? A centre designed to teach the sciences of botany, marine and fresh-water biology, entomology, zoology and ornithology, but also to show the delicate balance of nature, the need for conservation, and from the evidences of scientific fact, to consider the God of Creation.

How will it work? Mornings will be spent in lectures followed by field and laboratory work, with the evenings given to Bible Study and informal worship.

Who will come? The age range will be between 14 and 19 years, with the occasional courses for younger children and adults. Each course will be designed to run for a week or two weeks, with possible weekend courses. Initially we want to draw on young people from churches and youth groups who have some background in Christian teaching, but who may be somewhat confused by the teaching in schools and colleges which insists on the theory that present life is the result of variation and natural selection from a beginning of inanimate matter, and which rejects all thought forms which include God and Special Creation."

Further details may be had from: Withycombe Barton, St John's Road, Exmouth, Devon.

Report on the Bible-Science Seminar held at Swanwick, 10-12 April

Speakers at this Conference, the theme of which was 'To God be the Glory', included Dr Monty White, Pastor David Rivers, Mr Malcolm Bowden and several others. From the outset it was clear that the aim of the speakers was to present a 'popular' approach to the question of origins rather than a specialist one. Pastor Rivers asked 'Why all the fuss about Origins?', and suggested that if we wanted to consider where we were going, we had first to ascertain where we had come from. He pointed to the ethical effects of evolutionary teaching, and its being a 'let-out' for people who do not want to acknowledge a Creator.

Dr White, on 'What does the Bible teach about Creation?', examined the evidence for a literal six-day creation, and sought to disprove the 'Day-Age' theory. He argued that there was a link between doubt about creation and fall and doubt about atonement, repentance and regeneration. There followed the film, 'Footprints in Stone' telling of the discovery of human and dinosaur footprints side by side in Texas. Dr White illustrated a lecture on 'Fossils and Faith' with slides, showing how the fossil record agrees better with creationist than with evolutionary theory.

Pastor Rivers began the second day with a criticism of the 'Gap' theory, and Dr White then discussed theistic evolution, pointing particularly to New Testament references supporting a literal reading of Genesis 1 and 2 (for instance, Mk 10:2-9, I Cor 15:22, 45, and the genealogy of Jesus in Lk 3). He also took a critical look at the JEDP hypothesis (of the writing of the Pentateuch). He concluded by challenging the theistic evolutionist to believe what the Bible, rather than science, says about man's origins.

Under the title 'Liberalism', Pastor Rivers examined the critical approach to the Bible. He stressed the dangers and limitations of rationalism in dealing with the supernatural in the Bible. The film 'The World that Perished' followed, surveying the Flood of Noah and the various traditions of a Flood which are to be found all over the world. Then Malcolm Bowden spoke on 'The Flood and its Aftermath', and later Pastor Rivers on two aspects of the New Creation - man, and his environment. The day closed with Dr White speaking on 'The Creation of the Heavens', expounding I Corinthians 15:40, 41 with slides of the heavenly bodies. Discussion groups followed on various topics.

The final morning began with a session, chaired by Mr Thomas Daniel, on Creation Societies and Centres. Dr White had prepared an informative hand-out to help us; and the Revd. Howard Bracewell shared his vision of a creation field study centre to be established in Devon (see elsewhere in this News section for more details - ed.). The closing session, chaired by Mr Bracewell, asked the question 'What can be done?', looking at literature, meetings, and the problem of education. Professor Tony Holland spoke about the mass media, and Howard Bracewell summed up the message of the Seminar: the need for the creationist case to be put forward positively.

Compiled from a longer report by Norman C. Lowndes
Head of Religious Education
Broadway Boys' Comprehensive School
Cheadle, Cheshire

"GENESIS QUESTIONS" is the title of a series of short articles we plan to carry dealing with problems and queries which frequently arise. We shall be happy to receive suggestions of issues which might suitably be included. In this first contribution Gordon McConville looks at the Hebrew word for 'day'.

YŌM - DAY

G.J. McConville

It is tempting, because of the prevalent scientific opinion as to the age of the earth, to ask if the word yōm (day) in Gn. 1 might be interpreted otherwise than literally. In particular, some who have wished to maintain the historicity of the Genesis account, while accepting a long age of the earth, have thought that the 6 days of creation have corresponded to the ages of earth's early history. The correspondences between the evolutionist's ages and the days of Genesis are not to be lightly dismissed. (They are documented in detail by D. Young in Creation and the Flood, a book reviewed in our first issue.) But the position is seriously hampered by the fact that there is no evidence in the OT that yōm can mean a long period of time.

Certain passages are adduced to bolster the claim that it can. In Ps. 90:4 we read: "A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past" (RSV). ('Yesterday' is literally ' the day (yōm) before'.) This does not expand the day into a thousand years, however. On the contrary, the point of the simile depends entirely upon the fact that a day is a short period. Then there is the expression "the day of the Lord" (Joel 2:15). It is true that the length of time in the "day" is not in view here, and indeed irrelevant. But it is no easier to read this usage back into Genesis 1, since in the latter place the days are arranged into a week and the time-element is, on the face of it, unavoidable. The plain reading of the OT, therefore, suggests that its writers and readers would have understood the days of creation as literal days; and this is nowhere more strongly suggested than in Ex. 20:11, where God's 'working week' becomes a pattern for man's.

But before we plump for a 6-day creation, it is worth remembering that there are features of Gn. 1 which make the use of language there, and yōm in particular, unique. Most obviously, 3 "days" of creation have elapsed before the sun and the moon turn up! However we imagine these days they must be different in some aspects from those we are familiar with. Commentators unite in saying that the Hebrew mind could conceive of light and darkness without necessarily connecting them with the luminaries (cf. Job 38:19f). But 6-day creationists taking up this fact have sometimes interpreted the relation of light to the sun in a too mechanical way, resulting in a disjointed interpretation which misses the essential unity of the chapter.

It has to be borne in mind also that Gn. 1 has purposes in view other than the mere statement of historical facts, though it certainly

does that. It points to the God who created, and shows him to be Lord of creation (implied in the fact that he gives names to the things he creates). In the division of the light from the darkness, furthermore, there is a statement that God imposed an order on what he created. The darkness of v.2, which many commentators have taken to represent uncontrolled chaos, is subjected to God when he divides night from day. Considerations like these have undoubtedly contributed to the form in which the chapter has been given to us.

The fact that Gn. 1 is an historical statement, therefore, may not necessarily lead us to thinking in terms of creation in 6 literal days. The passage is unique, inevitably, since it is the act of creation that is described. This may mean that the use of yōm is unique also. Indeed the fact that it is the act of creation that is presented, may by definition defy description in terms of temporal categories which belong, after all, to the created order itself. (This, of course, applies to aeons as much as to 24-hour days.) Perhaps in the end the narrative tells us no more about the creation as history than that it happened, and there was an order to it. Like Job, we were not there when God 'laid the foundation of the earth' (Job 38:4). Yet the use of yōm, and the space given proportionately to the account of creation and to the rest of the history of redemption, suggest brevity, and we should not, in sitting loose to a 6-day scheme, fall into the millions of years postulated by evolution.

In fact, if we do hesitate over a 6-day creation, it is essential to ask ourselves why we do so. For some, it seems, it is because the authority of science is weightier than that of scripture. The days of creation require us, before we follow any further the evidence of both science and scripture about creation, to ask ourselves if we are prepared to accept anything the Bible teaches about God, wherever it might lead us. "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" (Gn. 18:14).

HISTORY AND THEOLOGY IN GENESIS 1-3

Ranald Macaulay

One of the striking features of the Bible is its history. From its opening pages the Bible is a story. It describes what has happened to man from the beginning; not in an exhaustive way, and quite explicitly from the perspective of God's creation and subsequent salvation until the coming of Christ. For these reasons it must be distinguished from a 'history book'. But, despite its theological nature it is history, a story about real people and real places. Strikingly too it is no longer possible to ridicule that story. There was a time not so long ago when it was fashionable to do so, even in the name of science. Archaeology has produced so many confirmations of its account - and that after a period of intense investigation and ruthless criticism covering approximately 150 years - that scepticism has had to give way to confidence. (Scepticism remains, of course, but due more to the rationalistic 'traditions' of higher criticism than to any 'hard' evidence of history itself.)

One large exception remains - the "Genesis account" as it is called. We may accept the reliability of Acts and its account of Paul, or of the Gospels and their account of Jesus, or of the books of Kings and Chronicles and their account of Judah and Israel, and even of Exodus and its account of Moses and the Israelites. But not Genesis 1-3! Here, it is claimed, we are projected into the category of pre-history, of myth, of parable. The account in Genesis about how God made everything including the first man and woman, and particularly of the Fall in Genesis 3, are seen as a story of the imagination rather than an account of fact - not literally true but of spiritual value describing something which is of present significance for man.

Now, why should this be? Why should our growing confidence in the history of the entire Bible, covering approximately 2,000 years and reaching as far back as Genesis 11 suddenly be stopped short in the pre-Abraham section? The answer is not hard to find: evolutionary thought dominates the western mind so completely that for many it has become inconceivable that Genesis 1-3 should be considered literally true. The idea of an original couple as such presents no problems - for if the population 4,000 years ago was minute by comparison with the population today, why could there not, for argument's sake merely, have been a single couple thousands of years before that. Yet there is an impenetrable barrier to this whole approach. It has become an almost unchallengeable dogma of modern thought that Genesis 1-3 is not, and could not be, talking about 'real' history.

This is a serious matter for those who view the Bible as the criterion by which all statements are to be judged. For it poses in a simple manner the penetrating question about what undergirds all detailed theological statements, namely the nature of God's revelation. Is the Bible a book about theological issues only? Certainly its central theme and chief concern is theological - man's need of salvation. Are its

historical details then of little or no significance? Does it matter, for example, that Jesus was made to 'suffer under Pontius Pilate'? Is Pontius Pilate's real existence of any moment? Is this not a detail that could be laid aside without damaging the remainder of the Apostles' Creed or any other creed? It happens that an inscription has been discovered in the fairly recent past which puts Pontius Pilate's existence beyond doubt. But would it matter if this inscription had not been discovered? Do we need archaeological confirmations of all the historical references in the Bible before we can be sure of their reliability?

The Bible claims that it is God's completely reliable communication to man. Though given written form by human authors it is not a human book. It is authored, in the final sense (though without invalidating the responsibility of the human authors) by God. This being so all its communication is completely reliable, its historical references as much as its theological. Hence Christians throughout history have been assured of Pilate's existence - and words and acts even - despite the absence (until recently) of archaeological proof.

History and theology are the warp and woof of the Scriptures. They can be divided only by destroying the entire fabric. Closely juxtaposed with the references to Christ's death and resurrection are the references to Christ's trial before Pilate. If the Bible's account with regard to Pilate is challenged why may it not also be challenged with regard to Christ and his death? If the historical reality of Christ's death and resurrection (obviously along with its total significance), is disputed, then Christianity is vain - and we who have put our trust in Christ are "of all men most to be pitied" (1 Cor. 15:19).

It is not surprising, therefore, to find that the authors of the Bible themselves, and Christian writers through the centuries up until comparatively recent times, make no distinction between Scripture's theology and Scripture's history. Both are alike authoritative for them. What Vidler says of Christians around 1850 should always be true of them: they "continued to suppose that the Bible was unlike all other books: a divinely guaranteed repository about God and the world, true in all its parts.... Not only the Bible itself was accepted as completely dependable, but the framework of ideas that had come to be associated with it.... The world had been created by a sudden divine fiat, and all the species of animals as well as man were ready-made. It was assumed that the stories at the beginning of Genesis about Adam and Eve and the patriarchs were fully historical, and that Adam had been created in a state not only of innocence but of marvellous blessedness and wisdom which he had lost in consequence of a single act of disobedience, known as the Fall." (The Church in an Age of Revolution, p. 114.) But, it is suggested by some contemporary Christian writers, the discussion about Genesis 1-3 is not about its authority but about its meaning: it is not a literal statement about origins but one which nevertheless has spiritual value. Such is the view which predominates in Evangelical cricles a little more than 100 years later. Evidently a change has occurred. It appears a powerful and necessary change. This is more because it accords with the evolutionary consensus within the culture as a whole than from any consistency with the Bible itself. For that reason it must be

resisted firmly, whether it be a majority opinion or not. There are two principal objections to such a view, one concerning Biblical interpretation, the other theology.

1. Biblical Interpretation

a) The New Testament refers to the creation and fall of Adam and Eve on a number of occasions. Whenever it does so it speaks as if Genesis 1-3 is historically reliable. For Paul it is the one act of Adam that has affected the whole human race; that is why there is abnormality, that is why there is death (Rom. 5:12ff). He also maintains the chronology and manner of the original creation: Adam was made first, then Eve (1 Tim. 2:13), and Eve was made from Adam (1 Cor. 11:8); and it was Eve who sinned first (1 Tim. 2:14). Likewise, Jesus says that all marriage has to be understood in reference to the first marriage - i.e. of Adam and Eve.

To suggest that such references, by Jesus and Paul, give authority to the theology of the OT but not to its history, because they took the OT at its face value, is to impose upon the authors of the NT a distinction of which they knew nothing. True, they did not see the OT as only history: John took the incident when Moses lifted up the brass serpent in the wilderness as foreshadowing Christ's death. Paul took Abraham's two sons, Ishmael and Isaac, as representing the two convenants, of work, and of grace (Gal. 4:21ff). But they did so within the context of the greatness of God, who providentially could make of real history a picture of the theological truths governing all mankind. The history is immoveable. To suggest that for Paul or John or any other of the NT writers the historical reality of Abraham, Isaac, Ishmael or Moses etc. was either disputable or of little importance is alien to the authors of the NT.

The problem then is this: the NT refers to historical details within the life of Christ and these must be accepted as completely trustworthy. Yet the NT also refers to historical details within the OT and does so with equal reverence, for "Scripture cannot be broken". On what basis then is it considered legitimate to relegate some of these references (i.e. to Adam and Eve, the Fall, etc.) to the category of myth or parable while others are received as trustworthy? The process is quite arbitrary and is so from the perspective of the NT itself. An examination of Genesis indicates it is so from the perspective of the immediate context also.

b) Within Genesis itself there is no indication that the opening chapters are to be read non-literally. For example, we may not distinguish between a poetic form in Genesis 1-3 and a prose form in the remainder. The OT is rich in poetry, and it also understands the significance of parable. In such cases, obviously, the non-literal interpretation is appropriate and necessary. We do not need to argue that God rides upon the wings of the wind or that his eye is running to and fro in the earth! Yet Genesis 1-3 is neither poetry nor parable. In fact the continuity of style from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Genesis is one of its remarkable features. To come to it without prejudice concerning its historical reliability is to come to a story which develops naturally and simply. In the beginning God made a particular

man and woman. They had children and certain things happened to them. Then the children in turn had children and so on. When one reads Genesis 3 and then reads Genesis 12 there is no division as if the first is evidently not historical and second evidently is. True, the setting seems different; so, for example, a serpent speaks and tempts Eve in Genesis 3. But can this not be viewed as a supernatural event equivalent to the transportation of Jesus to the temple in the NT during his temptation? And just as God reveals Himself to Adam in Genesis 3, He reveals Himself to Abram in Genesis 12.

The most that can be said about the style of Genesis 1 is that it uses a repetitive formula. But then so does Genesis 5:6ff in describing the descendants of Adam and Eve through Seth, for example, "A was x years old when he begat B ... and he lived y years after the birth of B and had other sons and daughters. Thus all the years of A were Z years, and he died". The formula is repeated 7 times.

One can also concede that the first 10 chapters of Genesis are compacted history. After Genesis 11 the story opens out and becomes more expansive. This is obviously part of the purpose of the author, who hurries to that part of the story which is central to his theme, the origin of the people of God, the nation of Israel.

But neither of these factors demands a non-literal form of exegesis. Both from the wider context (the rest of the Bible) and the immediate context (Genesis as a whole) there is no valid reason to introduce a non-literal view of Genesis 1-3 as if it were manifestly a 'special' type of literature. It is not - and hence is subject to the same canons of interpretation as govern the rest of Scripture. It is only since Darwin's evolutionary hypothesis that a non-literal view of Genesis 1-3 has been seriously entertained. The possibility does not even arise within the Bible itself.

2. Theology

The theological implications of a non-literal Genesis 1-3 are overwhelming. If there was not a real "Fall" there can be no Christianity! For if man was made with evil already present in his being, God was the author of evil. But man, the Bible says, was 'very good'. It insists that it was Adam's choice to disobey God when tempted which alone caused the subsequent evil of his experience and nature. It was not that God made a defective creature in the first place. This distinction is important on two counts:

First, it means that God's own character remains undefiled. He has made a creation which is aesthetically and morally perfect. Within it man is truly significant as the image of God i.e. as a person. As such man is able to love God and to defy God. To have a creation which includes persons is not to have an evil creation. Far from it. Rather it is something to be wondered at - that God has made significant persons within the sphere of a finite creation. For such creatures not to have choice of this sort is for them not to be persons. Their choice then to disobey God is their own responsibility. Their consequent guilt and abnormality is brought on them by their own selves. God is not responsible. He is not the author of evil. He is perfectly good. The

moral absolute of the universe, namely God's own character, is therefore undefiled. Hence man lives within a moral system which is completely trustworthy. Good and evil are never to be fused - as is the case, for example, in all pantheistic systems.

Second, the rationale of redemption is not undermined. If the Fall of Genesis 3 is not an historical reality, with, on one side of the chasm persons who are not evil, and on the other persons who are, the gospel becomes a farce. For why should God save from judgement those whom He has himself made for judgement? The Biblical position is quite different. It is not God who has made man a sinner but man who has made himself a sinner. Therefore when God chose to rescue man it was as the just "Judge of all the world" that the Second Person of the Trinity laid down His life. In so doing He revealed in glorious radiance that His character is also perfect love!

Now it is true that some who maintain a non-literal Genesis 1-3 do maintain an historical core to the account. This is a position favoured by many prominent Evangelicals in the UK today. They argue for an imaginative embellishment of an otherwise historical reality the details of which are unknown to us. The question may be asked, however, admitting that such a view falls within the boundaries of orthodox theology, whether it is in fact wise and helpful. On exegetical grounds it has no basis at all. On theological grounds it comes close to destroying the very foundations upon which the Christian system rests, namely that God is perfect in his character and has made man in His image without sin: for it tends to make its proponents think and speak less of the reality of the Fall. Such a view has the obvious attraction of relieving one of the need to get into argument about the physical process of human origins - and thereby of being ridiculed as a 'fundamentalist' or a 14th century medievalist, or whatever!

The position seems to arise from an inordinate fear that the mistakes of the Copernican controversy will be repeated. In part the fear is justified. Christians ought not to defend positions which only appear to be taught by the Bible (such that the sun goes around the earth) but in fact are not. But the parallel is then drawn: as it was wrong to oppose the new science taught by Copernicus, it is wrong to oppose the new science being taught by Darwin. The parallel, however, is a false one. When the Biblical texts which formed the basis of the discussion in the 16th and 17th centuries are considered carefully they are found to be less than a meagre handful - such as the Psalmist's paeon of praise about the sun like a bridegroom running his course, which is manifestly poetic imagery. Further there are no theological implications of accepting a heliocentric as against a geocentric view of the universe. No single doctrine is affected by the discussion. In the case of a non-literal view of Genesis, however, the theological implications are incalculable.

Of course it is necessary for Christians to subject their interpretations of the Bible to careful scrutiny when new scientific discoveries are made. Yet on the other hand, is it necessary for them to accept views in science simply because they are widely held? (The

theory of spontaneous generation was a majority view in Europe at one time, and not so long ago.) They have a prior responsibility - to the Word of God. If the Bible leads them, through its explicit teaching, to views which are unpopular, that is where they must go. They will therefore be unpopular in this humanistic age when they insist upon the reality of judgement and the need for all men to be saved. Why do they insist upon these things? Simply because the Bible teaches them clearly.

In the same way the Bible teaches clearly that God made a man and a woman in the beginning whose names were Adam and Eve, who were made without sin, and who subsequently fell at a moment in time. These are truths which are fundamental to the Christian faith. Let us heed Paul's warning not to "tamper with God's word." (2 Cor. 4:2).

EARTH'S ORIGIN; EARTH'S DESTINY:

Peter's Teaching on Creation and the Flood

David Watts

What do the New Testament writers teach about Origins? Do they consider Genesis 1-11 to be essentially myth or do they regard these chapters as reliable historical narrative? If today we seek to formulate Christian teaching by New Testament standards then we must grapple with these questions. Here we shall direct attention to the Petrine epistles, and particularly II Peter 3. Careful examination of this passage confirms that its pervasive background is the early chapters of the book of Genesis. Peter uses the Genesis narrative to argue towards future historical events. The inescapable inference is that the events related in Genesis must have been regarded by the Apostle as truly historical.[1]

1. A CONFLICT OF WORLD-VIEWS

The third chapter of II Peter commences with the announcement that what follows is to remind us of teaching formerly conveyed by prophets and apostles. This coupling together of the prophets (in effect the OT) and the apostles as joint witnesses to the Christian revelation occurs also in Ephesians 2:20. The importance of their message is thereby underlined.

Peter proceeds (v. 3) to single out what, in the present critical juncture, seemed to him the specially relevant message of prophecy and the apostolic tradition. Christians are going to face opposition to their beliefs, for people will come and ridicule the whole supernaturalistic framework of Biblical teaching. This opposition was to arise within 'the last days' - the Christian era from the resurrection of Jesus Christ to the time of his return. There were scoffers already present as Peter wrote (for example, the men described in ch. 2). But he reminds his readers that prior warning had been given of their arrival; (hence the use of the future tense: 'there will come'). The form of unbelief described herein has been a recurrent feature of Christian history, and is therefore by no means unique to the 20th century.

A particular focus of mockery (v. 4) was the apparent failure of the hoped for consummation by the return of Christ. This scepticism was then (and is today) not based merely on a negative denial of the Second Advent. It is rooted in a positive espousal of a world-view incompatible with belief in God's sovereignty. A conflict is therefore present between an alien world-view[2] and that of Christian Theism. The assumed basis for the sceptical attitude is reported succinctly in the words:[3]

> "... all things remain as they are from the beginning of creation." (v. 4b).

This proposition was clearly believed to be generally applicable to all time. According to this outlook the course of nature had remained uniform not merely since the time of the OT 'fathers'[4] but since the ultimate origin of the world. These words undoubtedly have a contemporary ring. However, it would be wrong immediately to 'read back' modern philosophical concepts into the initial situation which Peter was confronting. These mockers may not have been strictly atheistic. But if they did believe in 'God' they did not think that he would act so as to 'interfere' with the affairs of men upon earth. On their premise, the scoffers concluded, there will not be an end to world-history and hence a final day of reckoning.

Peter's authoritative teaching is addressed to the Christian church throughout her subsequent history. In this wider context the statement of the scoffer's position also characterises the outlook of modern atheistic naturalism.[2]. The universe is envisaged as a closed system of cause and effect governed by immutable natural law, having neither beginning nor end. In such a system of thought, miracles cannot happen almost by definition.

In the verses which follow all such views are shown to be erroneous; for the world has undergone great changes within the memory of man. Peter advances four arguments. He appeals in turn to (i) the history of the earth and the world (v. 5-7); (ii) Biblical teaching on God and time (v. 8); (iii) the character of God (v. 9), and finally to (iv) the promise of Christ (v. 10). Here we shall be concerned with Peter's teaching in v. 5-7, 13.

Peter begins by indicating that the sceptics are ignorant of the truth: "For this is concealed from them ...". Moreover theirs is a guilty, culpable ignorance: "... because they wish (to remain ignorant)." Here there is an echo of the extended teaching of Paul in Romans 1:18-25 that men are guilty of suppressing the inescapable truth about the Creator which is both within their hearts and everywhere about them.

By introducing this ethical note Peter removes the discussion from the realm of the merely academic and only then launches into the subject of earth's origin and destiny.

2. THE ORIGIN OF HEAVEN AND EARTH

Peter takes the major premise of the scoffers first. Their assumption that this is an unchanging world is false, hence their conclusion (that it will remain so) is false also. They have chosen to forget that the course of nature is dependent upon God. Its predictability is a reflection of his faithful Providence.

Peter's statement in v. 5b is complex[5] but it may best be studied in terms of the original word order, and in two sections:- (a) "The heavens existed long ago and the earth ... formed by the word of God." (Ouranoi ēsan ekpalai kai gē ... sunestōsa tō tou theou logō).

The very phrase 'existed long ago' (ēsan ekpalai) and the participle 'formed' (sunestōsa) evidently refer to both the nouns 'heavens' and 'earth', as combined subjects.[6] In this context the participle

sunestōsa conveys both the transitive meaning 'formed' - referring to the original creation, and also the intransitive meaning 'consisted' - referring to continued existence with the implication of preservation. The latter meaning is also found in Col. 1:17, where the universe is said to cohere in Christ. Both of these meanings, 'formed' and 'consisted', are filled out through association with the following phrase[6] 'by the word[7] of God' (cf. Hb. 1:3; 11:3). Throughout their age-long existence, the earth beneath and the sun, moon and stars above are dependent upon God's powerful command for their preservation and government. This truth is a distinctive component of Biblical teaching.[8] Supposed pagan parallels to this concept are not true parallels at all. Here there is a clear echo of the fiat commands of Genesis 1, as expressed in Psalm 33:6,9:

> "By the word of the LORD were the heavens made,
> their starry host by the breath of his mouth."
> "For he spoke, and it came to be;
> he commanded, and it stood firm."

(b) "... and the earth (formed) out of water and by means of water", (kai gē ex hudatos kai di' hudatos).

The understanding of these words has frequently been confused by the endeavour to interpret the passage against the background of the 'creation' myths[9] of Assyria, Babylonia, Egypt, etc. These myths portray a primaeval ocean as the element out of which the universe originated. This idea lay behind the subsequent teaching of Thales of Miletus (c. 600 BC) that water is the basic stuff out of which all things are made. It is grammatically possible (so NEB), but not at all necessary, that the phrases 'out of water' and 'by means of water' could apply to the 'heavens' as well as to the 'earth'. But this suggestion should be dismissed (so AV, RV, RSV, NIV) on the grounds that Genesis 1:2, 9-10 is the real background to Peter's teaching. This envisages the early earth, but not the heavens being originally submerged under water.

On the third day of creation, the earth or specifically the dry land was formed 'out of (ek) water', by divine command. Peter's further statement may be taken to mean[10] that the formation of the earth was also 'by means of (dia) water'. This may refer to the mist (Gen. 2:5f) and rivers (Gen. 2:10-14) by which the earth was formed as a habitation for mankind. Without water, nothing could have flourished.

3. THE WORLD THAT PERISHED

Reference to the water associated with earth's formation leads on to the subject of the Flood, which is introduced in v.6. In the text the connecting words are literally 'by means of which things' (di' hōn) and the plural probably refers to water and to God's word.[11] When his word of judgement went forth at the Flood, the world was engulfed.

The precise wording is: "The then world being inundated by water, perished." (ho tote kosmos hudati kataklustheis apolēto). The main issue requiring discussion here is the exact reference of the phrase ho tote kosmos, 'the then world'. Kosmos[12] means basically the 'world-order,' which is opposed to chaos. In view of the similar context in chapter 2: v. 5 - "He did not spare the ancient world (archaios kosmos)...

when he brought a flood upon the world (kosmos) of the ungodly." - a primary reference to the world of men is indicated here also. This then clearly teaches the anthropological universality of the destruction wrought by the Flood. All except eight persons perished in this catastrophic judgement (II Pet. 2:5; I Pet. 3:20). God employed as means of overthrow the very powers which at first he ordained for blessing. The question now is whether 'the then world' is limited solely to the world of men, or whether this phrase also refers in some way to 'the heavens and earth' (cf. v. 7). The implication of the Genesis Flood narrative is that the Flood was global[13] and that there were significant effects upon the earth's terrain. This question is taken up below in the discussion of v. 7.

Meanwhile another question has so far been begged. Other interpreters[14] have considered that II Pet. 3:6 does not refer to the Flood described in Genesis 6-8. They relate v. 6 to the 'Ruin-Reconstruction' theory[15] of Genesis 1:2 according to which the world, following its original creation, became ruined prior to subsequent 'reconstruction' in the six days of Genesis 1. This Flood in v. 6 then, is seen as an instrumental cause of the world's ruin. Such an interpretation is surely inadmissible for the following reasons. First, v. 5 describes inter alia the earth's condition during the third day of the creation week (Gen. 1:9f), and the catastrophe of II Pet. 3:6 obviously follows this. Secondly, the Petrine epistles already refer twice before to the Noachian Deluge (I Pet. 3:20; II Pet. 2:5) and this wider context would therefore indicate reference to the same Deluge. Thirdly, Genesis 1:2 does not speak of a world perishing by being overflowed with water, whereas three chapters of Genesis are devoted to a description of the great Flood, which fits Peter's description perfectly.

These points are surely decisive against the Ruin-Reconstruction theory.

4. WHILE THE EARTH REMAINS ...

The train of Peter's thought now leads on to consideration of the final consummation, viewed as a day of judgement, v. 7. This also introduces reference to the preservation of earth and heavens unto this great day, through the longsuffering and righteousness of God.

"The present heavens and the earth by the same Word have been stored up for fire ..." (hoi ... nun ouranoi kai hē gē tō autō logō tethēsaurismenoi eisin puri ...). The reference to "the present heavens and the earth" seems to imply a contrast with 'heavens/earth' which were not present at the time when Peter wrote. This contrast is evidently between the 'then' (tote) of v. 6 and the 'present' (nun) of v. 7. That is, between a prior (Antediluvian) world-kosmos and the present one[16].

According to a different interpretation the contrast is between the present earth/heavens and the "new heaven and a new earth" explicitly described in v. 13, and therefore implicit in v. 7 as the outcome of judgement-day. On this view the 'present earth/heavens' exist from the original creation to the final consummation. However, this does not appear to be the contrast which Peter had in mind at this point, in view

of the immediate contrast between the situations of v. 6 and v. 7, denoted by tote and nun. Moreover, his statement comes in here as a logically powerful contradiction to the saying of the scoffers (v. 4).

Peter's backward glance, implied in v. 7, to the situation of the antediluvian world indicates that the destruction wrought by the Flood was not strictly limited to the world of men. Evidently the Deluge had global/cosmic effects. However there is nothing in this passage to require the word kosmos of v. 6 to be pushed to its utmost extent by making it simply identical in meaning with 'heavens and earth'. The analogy between present and antediluvian conditions is close, but not necessarily exact. Rationalistic critics, however, who wish to attribute far-fetched pagan mythological ideas[9] to the Bible are only too ready to attribute to Peter the view that the entire heavens 'being overflowed with water perished'. Kosmos, as an indefinite common term, takes in 'the heavens and the earth' as instrumental in, and purified by the destruction. The world was not annihilated, but lost its previous form as a kosmos and passed into a new state. Noah stepped out of the Ark on a new world, the face of the heavens clear and the face of the earth renewed. Similarly we anticipate a far greater transformation with the formation of a new heavens and a new earth (v. 13).

Peter's concern in v. 7 is that we now reckon with the certainty of the approaching consummation in the final judgement and the ensuing renewed universe. As surely as God's word brought the judgement of the Flood so, by that constantly watchful Providence, the creation is preserved until the day of final purification. As God has previously promised:

> "While the earth remains,
> seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat
> and summer and winter, and day and night
> shall not cease." (Gen. 8:22).

5. CONCLUSIONS FOR TODAY

Throughout II Pet. 3:4-7, the apostle's stress upon the importance of the historicity of the creation and Flood comes through distinctly. These major events of world history were characterised by great departures from the uniformitarian 'natural law' on which the scoffers based their hopes. Only by regarding early Genesis as genuinely historical could Peter thus argue the certainty of the consummation of history.

In the allusion in v. 5 to Genesis 1:2, 9f, Peter acknowledges this opening chapter of the Bible as sober history[17], a record of events which actually occurred. Moreover, the reference in v. 6 to the great Flood in the days of Noah highlights the historical reality of this event, and the anthropological universality of its effects, as do the parallel references in I Pet. 3:20 and II Pet. 2:5. The contrast between antediluvian and present conditions drawn in v. 6/v. 7 points to the global/cosmic scope and effects of the Flood, as detailed in Genesis 6-8.

Finally, Peter reiterates the teaching of Jesus Christ himself

(Mt. 24:38f) - adumbrated by the historic fact of the great Flood - and thereby highlights the certainty of his final return to judge the world. This anti-naturalistic outlook should have a central place in any biblical thinking on world history.

Notes and References

1. It has been suggested that some theistic evolutionists might take this article to imply that they are among the 'scoffers' to whom Peter refers. There is no intention to question either their intelligence or their sincerity; but the contention is that their position will not square with Scripture.

2. For analyses of secular world-views, consult the writings of C. Van Til and F.A. Schaeffer. Note also: James Sire The Universe Next Door: A guide to world-views. IVP 1977 and J.S. Halsey, For a time such as this. PRPC 1976

3. Greek: panta houtōs diamenei ap' archēs ktiseōs. In a Biblical frame of reference ap' archēs ktiseōs means "from the beginning of creation (as described in Genesis)" cf. Mark 10:6; 13:19; Rom. 1:20 etc. cf. TDNT I p. 478-484, IIIp. 1000-1035.

4. Every other NT reference denotes the OT Fathers; cf. Acts 3:13; Rom. 9:5; Hb. 1:1 etc.

5. Exegetical discussion is provided in the commentaries by H. Alford (1880), C. Bigg (1901), J.B. Mayor (1907), M.R. James (1912), J.K. Schelkle (1961), C. Spicq (1966) and J.N.D. Kelly (1969).

6. Sunestōsa (from sunistēmi) is a feminine singular perfect participle and so, in strict syntax, should qualify 'the earth' (gē) only. But irregular construction with the singular is often the result of attraction to the number and gender of the nearest noun, (TDNT V p. 514 n 128). Moreover, since the concluding phrase 'by the word of God' presumably belongs with 'heavens' as well as with 'earth' (compare v. 7) this tends to confirm that the intervening word sunestōsa also refers to both.

   Sunistēmi has various shades of meaning in different contexts (Arndt/Gingrich, Lexicon p. 798; TDNT VIII p. 896-8). These include the transitive meanings: 'bring together', 'unite', 'constitute', 'establish', and the intransitive meanings: 'cohere', 'consist', 'exist', 'stand together'.

7. It is perhaps possible that Peter had in mind here Christ as the eternal Logos (cf. v. 7 and Jn. 1:1; Hb. 1:2).

8. See G.F. Hasel, The Polemic Nature of the Genesis Cosmology, Evangelical Quarterly, 46, 81-102 (1974) esp. p. 90f.

9. J. Chaine, Cosmogonie Aquatique et Conflagration Finale D'Après La Secunda Petri. Revue Biblique 46, 207-216 (1937)

10. This understanding of dia as 'by means of,' is compatible with its usage in the following verse 6.

    Another possible, but less likely, interpretation of di' hudatos is: 'between water', referring to waters above and below the earth's land surface.

11. Compare v. 7, where the Word of God and fire are together associated with the consummation. The only plural word in the preceding section is 'heavens' but this is somewhat remote to be an antecedent. It is also unlikely that 'water' alone is the antecedent even though the word is employed twice in different ways; (Kelly, p. 359f).

12. Arndt and Gingrich, p. 446-8; TDNT III p. 868-895; NIDNTT I p. 521-6.

13. We consider the text of Genesis 7:19ff decisive in favour of a global flood.

14. For example, J. Sidlow Baxter, Explore the Book, London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1951.

15. For an exposition of this theory see A.C. Custance, Without Form and Void, Canada, 1970. A thoroughgoing critique is provided by Weston W. Fields, Unformed and Unfilled. PRPC 1976.

16. The proper translation of the particle de (which links v. 7 to v. 6) cannot decide the interpretation of vv. 6 and 7. In general de can serve as a conjunctive particle (rendered 'and' or even omitted) or as a disjunctive particle (rendered 'but'). Decision between these alternatives is controlled by the contextual meaning, not vice versa. (Arndt and Gingrich, p. 170).

17. See further, E.J. Young. Studies in Genesis One. PRPC, 1964.

DARWIN'S ARGUMENTS AGAINST CHRISTIANITY AND AGAINST RELIGION

Benjamin B. Warfield

Science has not broken with religion. But a large number of the scientific thinkers of our generation have. When we ask why, the reason returned is apt to be coloured by the personal feelings of the answerer. One attributes it to the bondage into which what he speaks of as "so-called modern science" has fallen, to materialistic philosophy, or even to Satanic evil-heartedness. Another finds its explanation in the absorption of scientific workers, in this busy age, in a kind of investigation which deadens spiritual life and spiritual aspirations within them, and totally unfits them for estimating the value of other forms of evidence than that obtained in the crucible or under the microscope. Others suppose that it is the crude mode in which religion is presented to men's minds, in these days of infallible popes and Salvation Armies, which insults the intelligence of thoughtful men and prevents their giving to the real essence of faith the attention which would result in its acceptance. Others, still, conceive that it is advancing knowledge itself which in science has come to blows in religion with the outworn superstitions of a past age. In such a Babel of discordant voices it is a boon to be able to bend our ear and listen to one scientific worker, honoured by all, as he tells us what it was that led him to yield up his Christian faith, and even, in large measure, that common faith in a God which he shared not with Christians only but with all men of thought and feeling. A rare opportunity of this sort has been afforded us by the publication of the Life and Letters of Charles Darwin, by his son, in which is incorporated a very remarkable passage, extracted from some autobiographical notes written by this great student of nature, as late as 1876, with the special purpose of tracing the history of his religious views. Certainly no one will hesitate to accord to him a calm hearing; and we cannot but be instructed by learning by what processes and under the pressure of what arguments so eminently thoughtful a mind was led to desert the faith in which he was bred, and gradually to assume a position toward the problem of the origin of the world which he can call by no more luminous name than that of agnosticism.

The history of the drift by which Mr Darwin was separated from faith in a divine order in the world, divides itself into two well-marked periods. The first of these, which was completed at about the time when he reached his fortieth year, ends with the loss of his Christianity. During the second, which extended over the remainder of his life, he struggled, with varying fortunes, but ever more and more hopelessly, to retain his standing at least as a theist. At the end of the first he no longer believed that God had ever spoken to men in his Word; at the end of the second he more than doubted whether the faintest whisper of his voice could be distinguished in his works. He was never prepared dogmatically to deny his existence; but search as he might he could not find him, and he could only say that if he existed he was, verily, a God that hides himself.

Let us take up the matter in the orderly form which Mr Darwin has himself given it, and inform ourselves seriously what were the objections to Christianity and the difficulties in the way of a reasoned theism which led him to such sad conclusions.

His account of his loss of Christianity takes the shape of a personal history. He gives us not so much an argument against Christianity as a record of the arguments which led him to discard it. These fall into two classes: in the first stands the single decisive argument that really determined his anti-Christian attitude; while in the second are gathered together the various supporting considerations which came flocking to buttress the conclusion when once it was attained. The palmary argument depends for its weight on a twofold peculiarity of his personal attitude. He had persuaded himself not only that species originated by a process of evolution, but also that this process was slow, long continued, and by a purely natural development. And he held, with dogmatic tenacity, the opinion that the Book of Genesis teaches that God created each species by a separate, sudden, and immediate fiat. If both these positions were sound, it followed necessarily that either his theory or Genesis was in error; and to him, in his naturally enthusiastic advocacy of his theory, this meant that Genesis must go. Now he was ready for another step. Genesis is an integral part of the Old Testament, and the Old Testament is not only bound up with the New Testament in a single volume, but is in such a sense a part of Christianity - as its groundwork and basis - that Christianity cannot be true if the Old Testament record is untrustworthy. To give up Genesis is, therefore, to give up Christianity. Thus his chief argument against Christianity reduces itself to a conflict between his theory of evolution and his interpretation of Genesis, about the accuracy of both of which there are the gravest of doubts. Here is the form in which he himself describes the process: "I had gradually come by this time, that is, 1836 to 1839, to see that the Old Testament was no more to be trusted than the sacred books of the Hindus. The question then continually rose before my mind, and would not be banished: is it credible that if God were now to make a revelation to the Hindus he would permit it to be connected with the belief in Vishnu, Siva, etc., as Christianity is connected with the Old Testament? This appeared to me as utterly incredible."

It was impossible, however, to deal with Christianity as if it came claiming our acceptance uncommended by evidence of its own. The assumed conflict with Genesis would be fatal to the theory of evolution if the Christianity in vital connection with Genesis were confessed to be truth demonstrated by its own appropriate historical evidence. Mr Darwin could not, therefore, rest in this short refutation without calling to its aid other more direct arguments, such as would suffice to place Christianity at least on the defensive and thus allow the palmary argument free scope to work its ruin. Thus we read further: "By further reflecting that the clearest evidence would be requisite to make any sane man believe in the miracles by which Christianity is supported, and that the more we know of the fixed laws of nature the more incredible do miracles become; that the men at that time were ignorant and credulous to a degree almost incomprehensible by us; that the Gospels cannot be proved to have been written simultaneously with

the events; that they differ in many important details, far too important, as it seemed to me, to be admitted as the usual inaccuracies of eye-witnesses - by such reflections as these ... I gradually came to disbelieve in Christianity as a divine revelation. The fact that many false religions have spread over large portions of the earth like wildfire had some weight with me."

This is Mr Darwin's arraignment of the Christian evidences. A close scrutiny will reveal the important place which miracles occupy in it. It may almost be said that Mr Darwin concerns himself with no other of the evidences of Christianity, except miracles. It looks as if, in his objection to Christianity, arising from the conflict that existed in his opinion between Genesis and his theory of evolution, he felt himself faced down by the force of the miracles by which, as he says, "Christianity is supported," and felt bound to throw doubt on this evidence or yield up his theory. In one word, he felt the force of the evidence from miracles. It is instructive to observe how he proceeds in the effort to break the weight of their evidence. He does not shortly assert, as some lesser scientific lights are accustomed to assert, that miracles are impossible. He merely says that they need clear evidence of their real occurrence to make us believe in them, and that this is increasingly true as the reign of law is becoming better recognised. And then he tries to throw doubt on the evidence of their occurrence: they profess to have been wrought in a credulous age; the documents in which they are recorded cannot be proved to be contemporaneous with their asserted occurrence, and are marred by internal contradictions in detail which lessen their trustworthiness; and it is not necessary to assume the miraculous origin of Christianity in order to account for its rapid spread. In a word, Mr Darwin deserts the metaphysical and what may be called the "scientific" objections. He does not say miracles cannot have occurred; he merely says that the evidence on which they are asserted to have occurred falls something short of demonstration.

Were our object here criticism rather than exposition, it would be easy to show the untenableness of this position: it was not in the field of the historical criticism of the first Christian centuries that Mr Darwin won his spurs. There are also many more sources of evidence for Christianity than its miracles. It is enough for our present purpose, however, to take note of the form which the reasoning assumed in his own mind. It has a somewhat odd appearance, and was about as follows: The miracles by which Christianity is supported are not demonstrably proved to have really occurred; therefore the conflict of my theory with Genesis, and through Genesis with Christianity, is not a conflict with miraculous evidence; therefore my theory may as well be true as Christianity. The validity of the inference seems to rest on the suppressed premise that none but miraculous evidence would suffice to set aside his theory. And there is a droll suggestion that his state of mind on the subject was not very far from this: "I was very unwilling to give up my belief," he writes; "I feel sure of this, for I can well remember often and often inventing day-dreams of old letters between distinguished Romans, and manuscripts being found at Pompeii or elsewhere, which confirmed in the most striking manner all that was written in the Gospels. But I found it more and more difficult, with free scope given

to my imagination, to invent evidence which would suffice to convince me. Thus unbelief crept on me at a very slow rate, but was at last complete. The rate was so slow that I felt no distress." Nothing short of a miracle would, then, have convinced him; and nothing short of a miracle could have convinced him of a miracle. Surely a man in such a state of mind would be refused as a juror in any case. In lesser causes we should speak of him as under bondage to an invincible prejudice; in this great one we are certainly justified in saying that his predilection for his theory of the origin of species, and that in the exact form in which he had conceived it, lay at the root of his rejection of Christianity. If both Christianity and it could not be true, why then Christianity certainly could not be true, and a full examination of the evidence was unnecessary.

It was some years after his giving up of Christianity before his belief in the existence of a personal God was shaken. But as time went on this also came. The account given in his autobiography of this new step in unbelief is not thrown into the form of a history so much as of ordered reasoning. So that we have, strangely enough, as part of a brief body of autobiographical notes, a formal antitheistic argument. The heads of theistic proof, which Mr Darwin treats in this remarkable passage, are the following: (1) "The old argument from design in nature as given by Paley"; (2) "the general beneficent arrangement of the world"; (3) "the most usual argument for the existence of an intelligent God at the present day, drawn from the deep inward conviction and feelings which are experienced by most persons"; and (4) the argument "from the extreme difficulty or rather impossibility of conceiving this immense and wonderful universe, including man with his capacity of looking far backwards and far into futurity, as the result of blind chance or necessity." The full development of these propositions, while it would be far, no doubt, from exhausting the argument for the existence of God, would afford quite a respectable body of theistic proof. In offering a refutation of, them, one by one, Mr Darwin evidently feels that he is sufficiently treating the whole fabric of theistic argumentation; and he draws an agnostic conclusion accordingly. It will be very instructive to note his answers to them, in as much detail as space will allow.

To the first - the argument from design as developed, say, by Paley - he replies that it "fails, now that the law of natural selection has been discovered." "We can no longer argue," he adds, "that, for instance, the beautiful hinge of a bivalve must have been made by an intelligent being, like the hinge of a door by man. There seems to be no more design in the variability of organic beings and in the action of natural selection than in the course which the wind blows." By this he means that the adaptations of means to ends, as observed in nature, are the necessary result of the interaction of the purely mechanical forces of nature, and would result from them whether there is a God or not; and that therefore they cannot be pleaded as a proof that there is a God. This conception of the working of nature is the result of the stringency with which he held to his theory of evolution by natural selection, in the exact naturalistic form in which he first conceived it. The second argument, that drawn "from the general beneficent arrangement of the world," he meets by a reference to the great amount

of suffering in the world. As a sound evolutionist he believes that happiness decidedly prevails over misery; but he urges that the existence of an intelligent first cause; "whereas the presence of much suffering agrees well with the view that all organic beings have been developed through variation and natural selection," which he appears to assume to be a necessarily antitheistic conception. In treating the third argument, derived from man's "deep inward conviction and feelings" that there is a God, to whom his aspirations go out, on whom he is dependent and to whom he is responsible, Mr Darwin confuses the "conviction" with the "feelings," and sets the whole aside as no more valid an argument for the existence of God than "the powerful, though vague, and similar feelings excited by music." He sorrowfully recalls the time when he too had such feelings rise within him in the presence of grand scenery, for instance - when he could not adequately describe the "higher feelings of wonder and admiration and devotion which filled and elevated his mind"; but confesses that they no more visit him, and that he might truly be said to be like a man who has become colour-blind and whose loss of perception is therefore of no value as evidence against the universal belief of men. But he denies that the "conviction of the existence of one God" (why "one" God?) is universal among men; and hints that he believes that all these feelings can be reduced to the "sense of the sublime," which, could it only be analysed, might be shown not to involve the existence of God any more than the similar emotions raised by music. The confusion here is immense - confusion of a conviction that accompanies, or rather begets and governs, feelings with the feelings themselves - confusion of the analysis of an emotion into its elements with the discovery of its cause, and the like. But the confusion and Mr Darwin's method of seeking relief from his puzzlement, are characteristic traits which may teach us somewhat of the value of his testimony as to the scientific aspects of faith. The fourth argument, that which rests upon our causal judgement, is the only one to which he ascribes much value. He does not hesitate to speak of the "impossibility of conceiving this immense and wonderful universe as the result of blind chance or necessity." But the question arises: Impossibility to whom? And here again Mr Darwin's theory of the origin of man, by a purely natural process of development from brute ancestors, entered in to void the unavoidable conclusion. "But then," he adds, "arises the doubt, Can the mind of man, which has, as I fully believe, been developed from a mind as low as that possessed by the lowest animals, be trusted when it draws such grand conclusion?" Or, as he writes later, after having again confessed to "an inward conviction that the universe is not the result of chance": "But then with me the horrid doubt always arises whether the convictions of man's mind, which has been developed from the mind of the lower animals, are of any value or at all trustworthy. Would anyone trust in the convictions of a monkey's mind, if there are any convictions in such a mind?" Thus the last and strongest theistic proof fails, not because of any lack in its stringent validity to the human mind, but because so brute-bred a mind as man's is no judge of the validity of proof.

We are tempted to turn aside and ask, Why, then, are the theistic proofs so carefully examined by Mr Darwin? Why is so much validity assigned to the judgement of his human mind as to the value of the argument from design, for instance? Why does he trust that brute-bred

mind through all the devious reasonings by which the theory of development by natural selection, on the basis of which the value of its conclusions are now challenged, was arrived at? In a word, is it not certain, if man's mind is so brutish that its causal judgement is not trustworthy when it demands a sufficient cause for this universe, that it is equally untrustworthy in all its demands for a sufficient cause, and that thus all the fabric of our knowledge tumbles about our ears, all our fine theories, all our common judgements by which we live? When Mr Darwin chokes down this "inward conviction" and refuses to believe what he confesses to be "impossible" to him not to believe, he puts the knife at the throat of all his convictions, even of his conviction that he exists and his conviction that a world lies about him, such as he sees with his eyes and theorises about with his "bestial" mind; and there necessarily goes out into the blackness of nescience all thought, all belief, all truth.

But we remember that we are not now criticising, but only trying to understand Mr Darwin's reasons for refusing to believe in "what is called a personal God." This much is plain, that the root of his agnosticism, as of his rejection of Christianity, was his enthusiastic acceptance of his own theory of evolution, in the mechanical naturalistic sense in which he conceived it. We raise no question whether this was an inevitable result; there have been many evolutionists who have been and have remained theists and Christians. But this was the actual course of reasoning with him. It was because he conceived of each organic form as liable to indefinite variation in every direction, and to development into other forms by the natural reaction of the environment on these variations, through the struggle for existence, that he denied that the hand of God could be traced either in the line of variation or in the selection of the types to live. It was because he included all organic phenomena, mental and moral as well as physical, in this natural process, that he found himself unable to trust the convictions of the mind of man, which was after all nothing but the brute's mind beaten and squeezed into something of a new form by an unmoral struggle for existence stretching through immemorial ages. In a word, Mr Darwin's rejection of Christianity and loss of faith in a personal God were simply the result of his enthusiastic adoption of a special theory of the origin of organic differentiation, and of ruthless subjection of all his thought to its terms.

And now, returning to our original query, we are prepared to answer why one scientific man broke with faith. Mr Darwin was honest in deserting the faith of his childhood and the theistic convictions of his manhood. But was he logically driven to it? He himself, despite himself, confesses that he was not. To the end his "conviction" remained irreconcilable with his "conclusion". Yet he was logical, if the evidence in favour of the extremely naturalistic form of the evolutionary hypothesis is more convincing than that for God and the Bible; but logical with a logic which strips the very logic on which we are depending for our conclusion of all its validity, and leaves us shiveringly naked of all belief and of all trustworthy faculty of thought. If we are to retain belief in our own existence, Mr Darwin himself being witness, we must believe also in that God who gave us life and being. We can only account for Mr Darwin's failure to

accept the guidance of his inextinguishable conviction here, by recognising that his absorption in a single line of investigation and inference had so atrophied his mind in other directions that he had ceased to be a trustworthy judge of evidence. Whatever may be true in other cases, in this case the defection of a scientific man from religion was distinctly due to an atrophy of mental qualities by which he was unfitted for the estimation of any other kind of evidence than that derived from the scalpel and the laboratory, and no longer could feel the force of the ineradicable convictions which are as "much a part of man as his stomach or his heart".

This is the text of a pamphlet now available free of charge in quantity from the Biblical Creation Society.

THINKING AGAIN ABOUT EVOLUTION

Most Christians take the theory of evolution for granted. 100 years ago the majority of Christians thought that the Bible did not agree with this theory; today we usually take the opposite view. This pamphlet aims to show that the matter isn't as simple as it might seem.

1. When Darwin first published his ideas, they were vigorously opposed, not only by Christian thinkers, but by leading scientists, some of whom were not Christians (and thus had no religious presuppositions to bring to bear in the issue). Although the theory did become widely accepted, it has always had its opponents. For instance, the first President of one of the British societies opposed to evolution was Sir Ambrose Fleming, FRS, who in 1905 invented the valve which made the development of radio and TV possible. More recently, in 1957, the Everyman library produced a special edition of Darwin's famous book The Origin of Species. They asked a famous scientist, Prof. W.R. Thompson, to write an introduction to it, and he produced 20 pages of devastating criticism of the argument of the book. And he was not a Christian.

In fact, despite the impression that is often given in schools and colleges, many scientists are not happy with the theory of evolution. One such scientist, K.A. Kerkut, who teaches biology at a university (and actually believes in evolution), describes how he sets his new students an essay asking them to outline the case against the theory. Most of them say there simply isn't a case at all - he says that they have been brainwashed.

Here it is important to distinguish between two separate theories which often go under the name 'evolution'. According to one, 'evolution' takes place on a small scale, and can be observed at close quarters in the laboratory. This theory is better called 'variation' - and nobody disputes its truth. But the so-called 'general theory' of evolution goes away from this strictly limited evidence to suggest that all the different forms of life evolved from one simple form, which in turn evolved from inorganic matter, all by a natural process. For this general theory there can be no empirical evidence. No-one obviously saw it happen; and because of the great periods of time involved, the theory can't be tested in the lab. So instead 'indirect' evidence is examined - rocks, fossils, and so on. What is clear, however, is that each piece of such evidence is open to different interpretations. That means, that scientific data can be interpreted in different ways, especially by those who believe in God. So to be true to the facts, we should start by looking at the Bible and the beliefs which we hold on its authority, to see what they are in themselves, rather than trying to force on them an interpretation which fits in with a scientific theory.

2. Can the Bible really be fitted in with evolution? Many have tried to harmonise them in various ways, but it has proved immensely difficult to find a satisfactory balance. This lack of consensus is the main reason why in the last 15 years or so there has been a strong rethink of the usual evangelical attitude to evolution, particularly in the USA, but also in Britain. More and more evangelical Christians are looking at the issues afresh and reaching fresh conclusions. Here we outline some of the reasons for their rethinking the whole matter.

a) To harmonise Genesis and evolution, you must interpret Genesis in a special way.

When we look at any other passage of Scripture, we do our best not to interpret it according to some prejudice of our own. We rather seek to hear what God has to say to us, even if sometimes we do not like what we hear. So, when we read of Jesus rising from the dead, we turn a deaf ear to those who say that such a thing could not happen. We listen instead to the Bible. Or in the case of the book of Jonah, where some opt for a 'literal' interpretation and others say that the book is a parable, we look for the answer in the text itself. We seek to discover what the Bible really says.

Now, in the case of Genesis, we read the later chapters of the book, about figures such as Abraham, as historical information. We turn back a few pages, and read about the confusion of languages at Babel, or the Flood in the time of Noah - these passages too read like historical information, even though we only have glimpses of what happened. We then find Genesis 2 and 3 joined to the beginning of this account; and this also reads like a straightforward narrative account of what happened (for instance, the verses about the geographical position of Eden, in Genesis 2.8, 10-14). In Genesis 1 we have a majestic account of the unique event of creation; but even here we read of evenings and mornings, of days which make the first week seem like the week we know (nowhere does the OT use the work yom - Hebrew for 'day' - to mean 'a long period of time', as some have suggested).

The point is this: there seems little reason to treat these first chapters of Genesis as if they were different from the Bible - and if we are to make them fit into the evolutionary scheme, we have to do just that.

b) If we accept evolution, it means God made a world full of suffering.

When we compare Genesis 1-3 with other well-known passages in the Bible, like Isaiah 11 or Romans 8, it is clear that God made a perfect ('very good') creation; the reason why there is so much wrong with the created world is that men ruined it. Yet, according to the theory of evolution, there was evil present in nature millions of years before man appeared on the scene - animals preyed upon each other and suffered, for instance. Clearly, the two accounts differ - the evolutionary theory must drive us to conclude that God's creation, full of suffering, was far from perfect.

Even if the Genesis creation-account is a myth, it still teaches that God's creation was perfect, and that it was spoiled by man. And we cannot reconcile that with the evolutionary notion that the world was made as we know it, with suffering and evil in nature right from the very start.

c) Why do people die?

Biblical teaching is that there is a very clear relation between sin and death. Death, indeed, is the result of sin. In Genesis 2, Adam is told that death will be his punishment if he sins. Ezekiel later writes that 'The soul that sins shall die', and Paul tells us that 'The wages of sin is death'. Death would not exist if man had not sinned.

However, according to the evolutionary theory, the first men simply inherited their physical make-up, subject to disease and death, from their animal ancestors. Is it possible to harmonise the two?

Some people have tried to do so by suggesting that when the Bible speaks of death it means 'spiritual death' - because of his sin, man is cut off from God. But there is no doubt that it is physical death that is spoken of, in addition to spiritual death. This is clear, first of all, from Scripture (see, for example, Romans 5.12ff). But, more important, Christians believe that the death of Jesus is the means of our being saved from the penalty of our sins. It was by his physical death on the Cross that Jesus met our account before the justice of God. That means that Jesus suffered physical death for our sins, because physical death is the penalty for sin. If this were not true, the cross is without meaning.

So we must have strong doubts about the ideas that man was made with a mortal body, in a world of disease and disaster.

d) What about the New Testament?

Christians look to the NT to decide matters of controversy among them. There can be little doubt that the writers of the NT regarded the opening chapters of Genesis as reliable in their plain, straightforward meaning. Paul, for example, used the details of the Genesis 2-3 account in a way which leaves us in no doubt that he read it as simply a narrative of what happened, as we see in Romans 5, I Corinthians 15, and I Timothy 2.

In conclusion

Evangelical Christians are thinking again about evolution. This is an outline of some of their reasons for doing so - and of course, we have only just begun to discuss them. Below are one or two suggestions for further reading. We invite you to think through these matters in the light of Scripture.

1. New Introduction to the Origin of Species (W.R. Thompson) - republished as a pamphlet by the Evolution Protest Movement, 13 Argyle Avenue, Hounslow.
2. Implications of Evolution (K.A. Kerkut), Pergamum Press (for scientists).
3. Is Evolution Scientific? (E.A. Andrews), Evangelical Press (booklet).
4. Bone of Contention (Sylvia Baker), Evangelical Press (booklet).

REVIEW

APE-MEN - FACT OR FALLACY?

By Malcolm Bowden. Sovereign Publications (PO Box 88, Bromley, Kent, BR2 9FF), 1977. 196 pp, £3.30, large paperback.

Malcolm Bowden's book submits the evidence claimed to show that man came from ape-like creatures to a very thorough examination, and is one of the most revealing and thought-provoking publications that has appeared on this subject. It is intended to sweep away the dust of decades that has tended to obscure the facts; critically to review the discoveries that have been made; and to observe the scientists in the process of formulating their theories.

Mr Bowden works his way through the maze of Piltdown Man, Pekin Man and Java Man, arguing that the finds have revealed more about the excavators and their very dubious methods of 'discovery' than anything else. Other subjects covered are: the fossilised remains of human beings in geological strata considered to be contemporary with or earlier than the ape-men, Neanderthal Man, the African ape-men, and a general critique of the methods used to analyse the fossil remains of ancient hominid bones.

Is it wise however in a book attacking Ape men in general, to spend so much time on Piltdown Man who has long been discredited and so little on Richard Leakey's recent finds in East Africa?

The newspaper interest in the recent suggestion that Professor Sollas was responsible for the hoax demonstrates that a book on Piltdown alone would be fully justified, and Malcolm Bowden's carefully researched case against the Jesuit, Teilhard de Chardin, as the perpetrator makes convincing and fascinating reading. Teilhard was the most junior of those involved in the excavation but was to become the most famous. He also became the sort of militant evolutionist who is always liable to fudge his facts. He developed a pseudo-scientific philosophy concerned with Man's rise from the primeval sludge to "Point Omega" when he would be like God. Nobel Prize winner for Medicine, Peter Medewar, called it 'pious bunk'. The circumstantial evidence against Teilhard is over-whelming; so much so that he takes on the role of pantomime demon whom we are expected to boo everytime he puts in an appearance in the book. We are not surprised, therefore, to find him involved with Pekin and Java Men, both of which are presented as fakes. Certainly, both are examples of the sort of poor quality science that characterises the whole of this field. Too often investigators decide what evidence they want to find before they start the dig. Contradictory finds, such as whole human skeletons found in deeper strata, are suppressed or ridiculed while supporting evidence is manufactured either by outright fraud or by the application of imagination and artistic licence.

Mr Bowden's book is excellent in its exposure of these methods and comprehensive in its range, so that it is a useful handbook for those called upon to speak on this subject. However, in concentrating so

much on Teilhard he seems to be hunting for a conspiracy where none may exist. I believe there is a plot to deceive but it is not a pantomime devil who has thrown over them 'a strong delusion to make them believe that is false'. (2 Thess. ch. 2 v 11).

The book is presented more as a scientific treatise than as an historical essay with the result that the text is broken up by frequent subheadings. This makes information easy to retrieve but hard to assimilate at a sitting. One unusual feature of the book is that virtually every one of the 153 references is to a secular rather than a Christian source. This should make the book more acceptable to scientists who tend to regard books on Creation as fundamentalist tub-thumping. Indeed, Mr Bowden's book has already been referred to by 'Nature' and the 'British Medical Journal'.

Terry Hamblin

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Contributors and Articles

We offer our apologies to the National Association of Evangelicals in the USA for our failure to acknowledge in BC2 their kind permission to reprint the article by Dr Schaeffer, first published by the NAE.

Ranald Macaulay leads the L'Abri community at Greatham.

B.B. Warfield, Professor of Didactic and Polemic Theology at Princeton Theological Seminary, New Jersey, USA, from 1887-1921, was the most respected and influential evangelical theologian of his generation. We are grateful to the Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company for their generous permission to reproduce this essay, published in Selected Shorter Writings of BBW, Volume 1.

Dr Terry Hamblin is a consultant haematologist at a hospital in Bournemouth.

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Biblical Creation Society Day Conference

As we go to press, plans are in hand for a major public conference to be held in central London, probably in mid-October. The title of the Conference will be 'Life on Earth: Evolved or Created?', and the aim will be to present the creationist case in a carefully argued and yet understandable manner. All are welcome to this gathering, and it is hoped that parties will be organised by those who see the importance of this matter. Further details available from the address on the back cover.

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